

## U.S. EPA Fact Sheet

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### **EPA Determines that the West Central Pinal Area has Attained The 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard**

August 22, 2013

#### **Summary**

- EPA is taking final action to determine that the West Central Pinal nonattainment area has attained and continues to attain the 2006 Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) 24-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard (2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS).
- EPA accepted public comment on the proposal for 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.
- Today's action recognizes continued air quality improvement in Arizona.
- The determination will suspend certain air planning requirements for this area as long as it continues to meet the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

#### **Background**

- EPA's determination is based upon complete, quality-assured, and certified ambient air quality monitoring data for the 2010-2012 time period.
- Today's final rule does not suspend all of the submittal requirements (e.g., new source review), and the official attainment status for West Central Pinal will remain nonattainment until the state submits and EPA approves a redesignation request and maintenance plan.

#### **Particulate Matter and Public Health**

- Reducing PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels is essential because fine particles can reach the deepest regions of the lungs and exposure is linked to a variety of significant health problems including damage to lung tissue, cancer and premature death.
- PM<sub>2.5</sub> can be emitted directly into the atmosphere or formed in the atmosphere as a result of various chemical reactions from emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and ammonia.

#### **Next Steps**

- Today's final rule will be published in the Federal Register in approximately two weeks and will become effective 30 days after publication.

**For More Information:** <http://www.epa.gov/region9/air/actions/az.html>